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THE

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Managing Editor

S. D. AHMAD

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نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

The Review of Religions

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Great Fundamentals

In the modern age of ideological conflict rival philosophies have dangled before the eyes of man their pet utopias promising a heaven of unending bliss and undying happiness. In final analysis it is the individual and his welfare that are basic to any philosophy of life claiming to guide men in his pursuit of happiness. In contemporary times the welfare state of Britain, the free enterprize of United States and the communist society of Soviet Russia all offer a way of life which each deems as the most effective means of securing that end. The first two give the individual full measure of freedom of choice ; the third believes in economic determinism which subjects the individual to external pressures that equalize his fate with a straw at the mercy of winds.

The Islamic conception of individual freedom

starts from a totally different plane ; it places highest value on the spiritual freedom of the individual. It is in this sphere that man must believe that he is free and must proclaim his spiritual freedom in the words : لا اله الا الله *i.e.*, there is no god but Allah. He shall choose no patrons other than Him (اربابا من دون الله). His faith is grounded in the fact that he is devoted to serve His cause and shall be called to account by Him.

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انا لله و انا اليه راجعون

This freedom from spiritual allegiance to others than God imposes on him certain obligations, the most important being a sense of continual awareness of the sovereignty of God and of his own duty to translate the belief into practice as to help in establishing pure worship of the Supreme Overlord. Such an attitude at once raises him to a high level of spiritual independence of all fellow-mortals. It, at the same time, gives him a new sense of dignity of the human soul.

Since Islam is both a religion and a faith, it is primarily concerned with the ultimate welfare of man to which are subordinated all the passing phases of his temporal existence. With final solvation as the goal, faith in the spiritual freedom of man and his allegiance to One Overlord, to the exclusion of every body else, is basic to Islam. The belief inspires the individual with courage beyond measure equipping him with reserves of patience rare to find among materialists. At the same time the faith in this great fundamental imparts in the believer a sense of mission, making for him the gift of life a highly precious favour he should make use of to the highest benefit

of his fellow-beings. The entire perspective of his life is thus changed, every brief moment assuming monstrous weight and every small act setting off a chain-reaction into the unending links of eternity.

The idea of oneness is not of a bare unit carrying its face value in terms of its arithmetic value. It is incomprehensibly greater far beyond the sphere of computation and far above the flight of imagination. This oneness implies not only singularity but also uniqueness and soleness, priority in terms of time and power, and a singleness that would tolerate no rival, no partner, and no equal in attributes of purity, knowledge, honour, charity, mercy, righteousness, glory, truth and vastness, might and majesty, dominion and benignness, grace, wisdom and bounteousness. For a believer in one God, nothing in the universe, not even a putrid matter, is unworthy of importance. It has its uses. Even a brief thought has its value and all great and small events together represent the sum total. It is, under God, that a believer takes up his post in his earthly life as the responsible and serious minded member of the human race working with integrity and whole-hearted devotion for the welfare of the society and his own ultimate happiness ; not as a rebel against the order of things but as a reformer and a source of inspiration and as a haven of comfort.

It must be understood that much faith in the One, the Unique, Sovereign Overlord promises voluntary subscription to the fundamental creed. Conversely it implies that one is equally free to deny him, for, faith calls for free choice and a choice pre-supposes two alternatives. The ultimate merit becomes due only for an act of voluntary faith free from all

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pressure. The conscience of man is not on sale : it has no price. Its complete freedom and its unfettered sovereignty is its intrinsic property and once it is vitiated, it is no longer the pure conscience, the impartial judge and monitor but a subdued slave and a traitor to its own sovereign status. It is therefore that Islam places the highest value on freedom of faith and is intolerant of coercion in matters of belief and that is why it imposes on itself the obligation of making its tennets and teachings not only clear in language and content but also in response to the inner perception of the human soul.

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The underlying cause of all early Muslim wars is the single objective of restoring full religious freedom so that all pressures and coercive forces are eliminated and man enjoys a climate of entire freedom from compulsion in the matter of faith so that it can be truly said that the conscience of individual accepts the faith solely due to his recognition of the fact that in doing so, he is pleasing none but his Maker and that in proclaiming his faith he is obeying no master other than the One Super-Lord. Any society that denies this fundamental right of the individual does so to its own detriment ; it indirectly forfeits its own right to self-determination and believes in the logic of fist instead of the logic of reason.

This principal fundamental relates primarily to the realm of spiritual faith. Another fundamental of invaluable importance is the idea of human equality, a fact proclaimed even by totalitarian regimes and exploiting colonialism. But there are no rules to ensure its practice in the modern society riddled with classes and clans. In some societies the equlity of man is restricted to the sphere of justice—that all men are

equal before the law. The factors of poverty and ignorance however do not weigh much in the scale when put against the assets of education and wealth. In Islam this equality of man is fundamental in many ways but above all before God. Islam interprets it as a brotherhood in the fatherhood of Divine Providence, as also because of a single common genus—men are the children of Adam, an offspring of the *soil.* A real sense of equality has been unfortunately markedly absent through-out the ages. Even the most advanced democracies are facing an uphill task in solving the racial problem. In Russia the Slavs are the chosen race. In Western democracies, the blacks are clamouring for equal rights. In India a large section of the people is doomed to perpetual bondage. In Africa the negroes are ousting the whites. The so-called fundamental human rights are far from assured. It is hard for the Brahmin to treat with the outcaste in terms of human brotherhood. The Brahmin refuses to behave even as the big brother. The whites have been long accustomed to look down upon the "nigger." The high-caste cannot throw down the bars all too readily. It calls for a supreme sacrifice of age-long prejudices founded in the history of the inter-clashes of the two racial groups. Neither an act of Parliament nor court decrees can even the scales. The problem however is not one that cannot be treated. Islam solved it centuries ago. It banned all colour and race bars and had such an equalizing force that it attracted the low caste as much as the high-born under the influence of its appeal in one indivisible fraternity. Slaves commanded armies. They founded empires.

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Scions of nobler families proudly served under them. Islam gave full equality : it made no reservations. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him ever and evermore) gave away in marriage his cousin Zainab to his servant and slave and later his son Osama commanded armies. Bilal the negro slave enjoyed great esteem among Muslims. Omar the second Khalifa and the mighty conqueror accorded him a place of preference to Abu Sufyan, the Chief of Quraish and father-in-law of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). In the course of his farewell address to his followers, the Holy Prophet said :

"O men, what I say to you, you should hear and remember. All Muslims are as brethren to one another. All of you are equal. All men of whatever position are equal."

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Then lifting his two hands, the Holy Prophet placed the fingers of one against the other and said "even as the fingers of the two hands are equal to one another. No one has any right to claim any preference over another." Then he asked, "Do you know what month is this ? What city we are in ? What day of the year it is today ? It was the sacred town, the sacred month and the sacred day," he said. He then declared "Even as this month is sacred, as this town sacred and as this day sacred, so has God made the life, property and honour of every man sacred."

Concluding he said, "What I enjoin on you today is not for today only. It is for all times to come. You should remember it and observe it until

you leave this world, and go to the next to meet your Maker.

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"What I have said to you, carry it to the ends of the world. May be the one who has not heard benefits thereby more than the one who has....."

There is nothing more comprehensive and more effective to ensure a happy social relationship among men. Either a Muslim is a big brother to the other or an equal or a younger. If elder, he has to be generous and indulgent, if equal he must not assert any superiority; if junior he offers respect and enjoys affection. It is an altogether wholesome relationship. A verbal assertion of brotherhood is hardly enough. Islam does not leave things at the slogan level. It goes much higher and devises means and measures to ensure practical results. It did not merely preach brotherhood; it founded a brotherhood and taught brotherliness through measures that one was obligated to take under certain circumstances so that the vital principle of brotherhood did not wither away. Muslims must exchange salutes, shake hands, exchange presents, invite one another to meals frequently, visit and tend the sick neighbours, kinsmen, friends and be hospitable to strangers. These are a few of the many measures devised to give practical shape to the idea of brotherhood.

"Beware, it is un-Islamic to fight a Muslim. It is a sin to abuse him. It is not lawlul for a Muslim to be angry with a brother for more than three days." he warned.

Never for once, did the Holy Prophet believe that he was superior to others. In war and in peace,

every time he was a comrade and an equal. There was no special seat for him to sit. He sat among his companions like one of them. A stranger would not know who the chief of the group was. Once during a journey, the companions divided their duties. The Holy Prophet undertook to collect fuel-wood for cooking food. The companions would not have it. They said they would do all the chores and serve him. He said he would not have a special treatment "as God loves not one who wants to be above his companions."

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During the Badr expedition, Muslims had very few mounts. Three men rode a camel, turn by turn. The Holy Prophet took his turn like others. The companions insisted that he ride and that they should walk. The Holy Prophet said, "You cannot walk faster than I and I am more anxious to win merit than you."

He shared the domestic work with his wives. Aisha says, "He engaged himself in household chores. He would patch his clothes with his hands. He would sweep the floor, milk the goats, do shopping, mend his shoes and mend the bucket and tether the camel and give it fodder and join the servant in kneading the dough".

God in Islam, Hinduism and Christianity

From a lecture of the Promised Messiah, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. Translated by Mr. A.R. Khan B.A.,L.L.B.

The God, the Muslims believe in, not only possesses all the excellences that man can think of, but is far more exalted and sublime than he can imagine. Truly speaking, the Divine Attributes are beyond the reach of human intellect, imagination and comprehension. The God of the Muslims is so Perfect in his attributes that a Muslim never feels shy of depicting Him in any assembly or gathering, whereas the followers of other faiths are afraid of being laughed at, when required to describe their Deities.

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The God Whom the Hindus believe in, and their Vedas present, is One Who has not made a single soul. Can a person who believes in such a God reply to the question ?

What does it matter if such a God dies ? Matter and soul have, according to your belief, an independent existence and are self-sufficient. What need is there, then, of any living God for their existence or maintence ?

Suppose, a man darts an arrow, and then dies while the arrow is still in motion. Will the arrow undergo any change or difference in its movement on account of his death. Once it has slipped out of his hand, it does not need his help for its movement. Thus, if the God of the Hindus ceases to

exist at a certain time, they will not sustain any loss or damage due to His non-existence. But, on the contrary, the God of the Muslims can not be supposed to suffer death, because the very term "Allah" suggests the complete absence of any defect or imperfection in Him.

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The *Aryas* (a sect of the Hindus) believe that matter and soul are co-existent and co-eternal with God. Now, if we ask them to prove the existence of God, what proof can they give of His existence? If, to prove His existence, they advance the argument that their God has composed the atoms into different objects, we shall rebut it by saying that, according to their own belief, atoms are eternal and self-sufficient. Now, their composition into different things is but an easy affair, and is of no importance; if they could self-exist, they could self-compose also. Further, if they expose the teaching of their religion that God has, in the Vedas, enjoined the women without any child by her own husband, to cohabit with other men in order to have a child, how disgusting and repelling will such a concept of God be to the audience! Furthermore, if they present the teaching of their religion to the effect that God cannot vouchsafe eternal salvation to any of His lovers and votaries, and on the Dooms-day, He will, of necessity cause even the soul that has merited salvation to undergo transmigration into another body; or if they present the teaching that God cannot bestow anything upon any person gratis, and every body shall get only what he earns by dint of his action, the question will, then, arise: What need is there

of the existence of such a God ? In short, those who entertain such concepts about God, have to eat a humble pie when required to describe Him.

Similarly, when the Christians say that Jesus is their God, and, at the same time, confess that he was beaten by the Jews, tried by Satan, oppressed with hunger and thirst and was, eventually, crucified in a state of failure in his mission, will any sensible person be prepared to accept him as God ?

In short, the followers of every religion, have to be ashamed of mentioning the God they believe in, but a Muslim should never fight shy of delineating his God before any audience, because the God he believes in, possesses all excellences, and is free from all flaws and wrong-doings, as the opening chapter of the Holy Quran depicts Him as a Being combining in Himself all good and perfect attributes.

(*Malfuzat* PP. 192-194).

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The Law of Apostasy in Islam

Dr. M. Nasim, London

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The Arabic word for apostasy is *Irtidad.* It signifies going back to unbelief. In its special sense it refers to the act of renouncing Islam. A person who turns back from Islam is called *Murtadd.*

There is a good deal of misconception about the subject of apostasy both among the Muslims and non-Muslims. Some Muslim theologians are of the opinion that if a person of age repudiates Islam, and if he does not recant even after he is asked to accept Islam again, then after a period of three days he must be put to death. It is also stated that if one kills an apostate without an order of the *Kadi* or ruler, or cuts his limbs he would incur no penalty of the law.

If there is unanimity between the various sects of Islam, it is on the point that Islam does not allow the taking of life of a person simply on the ground that he is not a Muslim. This being the case, it becomes immaterial whether the unbelief has been adopted after being a Muslim, and thus so far as the sacredness of life is concerned, the unbeliever (*Kafir*) and the apostate (*Murtadd*) were on the same footing.

The basic structure of Muslim jurisprudence is founded on the Quranic laws and the traditional sayings of the Holy Prophet. The Quran stresses the sanctity of human life, and it can be confidently stated that there is not a single verse in the Holy Quran sanctioning the killing of a *Murtadd* or apostate.

It is therefore important to examine under what circumstances it permits the taking of human life. The following verses deal with this matter :

1. The reward of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and strive to create disorder in the land is only this that they be slain or crucified, or their hands and their feet be cut off on alternate sides, or

> they be expelled from the land. That shall be a disgrace for them in this world, and in the Here-after they shall have a great punishment. (5 : 34)

It is evident that the punishment of death is prescribed for those who wage war against the Prophet and his followers, and create disturbance in the country, thereby disturbing the peace of the country. Even in these days the punishment of death is given practically in all the countries for these offences.

> 2. That you kill not the life which Allah has made sacred, save by right. That is what He has enjoined upon you, that you may understand. (5 : 152)

This verse clearly says that human life is sacred, and it can be taken only under the circumstances prescribed by God. About defensive wars which were allowed after years of persecution and consistant attacks by the enemies of the Muslims even when the Prophet and most of his followers had migrated from Mecca and settled in Medina. It is thus laid down in the Holy Quran :

> Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they are oppressed and Allah is well able to assist them, those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say, 'Our Lord is Allah'. And if Allah did not repel some men by means of others, there would surely have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated. And Allah will surely help one who helps Him. Allah is indeed Powerful, Mighty. (22 : 40, 41)

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It is thus evident from this that the permission to fight is given only in case of self-defence, and it was to save the places of worship of the Christians, Jews, and Muslims alike.

The Holy Quran nowhere gives permission to enter on an unprovoked war against any state—whether non-Muslim or Muslim. It itself lays down when the war should cease :

> And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion is freely professed for Allah, but if they desist,

then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors. (2 : 194)

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Now let us see what was the conduct of the Holy Prophet of Islam. It is a matter of history that he made peace with his enemies on numerous occasions, and stopped fighting when they wanted peace, even when their intentions were doubtful. This was according to the direction laid down in Quran :

> And if they incline to peace, do thou incline to it and trust in Allah ; He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. And if they intend to deceive thee—then surely Allah is sufficient for thee. (8 : 62, 63)

The conduct of the Holy Prophet of Islam on the occasion of the Hudaibiyya truce shows that for the sake of peace, he accepted terms which were regarded as humiliating by his followers who had taken solemn oath to lay down their lives if the Prophet had wanted. Thus the injunction of the Quran was fully carried out in practice by the Holy Prophet.

Then again it is a well-known fact of history that in the various letters which the Prophet sent to the Emperor Heraclius, the King of Persia, the Governor of Egypt, the Governor of Yemen, and the King of Abyssinia, inviting them to accept Islam, none contains a single word about the enforcement of Islam at the point of sword. Indeed the Holy Quran itself lays down in clear terms the way in which the message of Islam was to be preached. The following verses, *inter alia*, deal with this point :

1. Summon to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and with kindly warning : Dispute with them in the kindest manner. (16 : 126)

Similar injunctions are found also in the Medinite Surahs revealed at a time when the Holy Prophet Muhammad was at the height of his power, and at the head of a sufficiently strong and well organised state, able to enforce his doctrines.

2. Say to those who have been given the Book and to the ignorant, 'Do you accept Islam'? Then, if they accept Islam, they are guided aright, but if they turn away, then thy duty is only to convey the message ; God's eye is on His servants. (3 : 21)

3. But if they turn away, yet We have not sent thee to be guardian over them. Thine duty is to preach. (42 : 49)

4. And We have not sent thee otherwise than to mankind at large to announce and warn. (34 : 29)

5. Obey God, and obey the Apostle ; but if ye turn away, yet is our Apostle only charged with plain spoken preaching. (64 : 13)

6. Obey God and obey the Apostle : but if ye turn back, still the burden of his duty is on him only, and the burden of your duty rests on you. And if ye obey him, ye shall have guidance : but plain preaching is all that devolves upon the Apostle. (24 : 55)

7. Say, (O Prophet), the truth is from your Lord, wherefore let him who will, believe, and him who will, disbelieve. (18 : 30)

From the aforesaid unambiguous verses of the Holy Quran, it is evident that the Holy Prophet was enjoined to spread the message of God to the people and not to force them to accept it. As a matter of fact, no pressure or coercion was possible, as the Holy Prophet stood alone and unprotected against practically all the tribes of Mecca and surrounding places. He and his few followers were subjected to the most bitter, cruel, and persistent persecution all through the thirteen years when he was living in Mecca. The method of preaching is, however, laid down in the Quran in the following verse :

> Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and argue with them in a way that is best. Surely, thy Lord knows best who has strayed from his path ; and He knows those who are rightly guided. (16 : 126)

No Muslim who claims to be a true follower of the Holy Prophet of Islam can act otherwise than follow his example. When the Prophet himself could not compel a person to accept Islam, how can any true Muslim force a person who has renounced Islam to come to the old faith on pain of death. This will be against the definite teachings of the Holy Quran, and the

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example set up by the Holy Prophet.

The following verses of the Holy Quran make this position absolutely clear :

1. And say, 'It is the truth from your Lord; wherefore let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve'. (18 : 30)

2. Say, "O ye men, now has the truth come to you from your Lord. So whosoever follows the guidance, follows it for the good of his own soul, and whosoever errs, errs only against it. And I am not a keeper over you." (10 : 109)

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These verses show that in the matter of faith, God has given complete freedom of choice. After telling what is right and what wrong, God leaves the choice to people if there is freedom of choice, there cannot possibly be any question of compulsion in preventing people from renouncing Islam. Again it is stated :

3. And if thy Lord had enforced His will, surely all who are on the earth would have believed together. Wilt thou, then, force men to become believers? (10 : 100)

In this verse, God has clearly stated that in the matter of religion, there is no compulsion. If it was proper to use force, God would have Himself made all people in the world believers in Islam. He does not require any human agency to use force and prevent people from renouncing Islam.

From this verse it is also evident that the use of force in any shape or form in the matter of religion is not proper. If it is not right to force people to become Muslim, how can it be right to use force and prevent anyone from renouncing Islam. If the use of force is bad in the former case, it is equally bad in the latter, as by force no one can be compelled to have a firm and true belief.

In Sura Maida, which was revealed towards the close of the Holy Prophet's life, it is stated, "O ye who believe ! Should one of you turn back from his religion, then Allah will bring a

people whom He shall love, and they too shall love Him"(5 : 55). It is nowhere stated in this verse that a Muslim who renounces Islam should be put to death.

To guard against the possibility that Muslims might fall into the error of using force in matters of religion, in spite of the afore-said clear teachings of the Holy Quran, God has laid down in unequivocal terms, "*La ikraha fi-d-din*" that is, "there is no compulsion in religion" (2 : 257).

It is to be noted that this verse was revealed after the verses in which permission to fight in self-defence had been given. Then again it is stated, "Say, 'O ye disbelievers ! I worship not that which you worship. Nor you worship what I worship. And I am not going to worship that which you worship. Nor will you worship what I worship. For you your religion, and for me my religion'." (109 : 2-7)

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The exponents of the position that apostates should be put to death have not paused to consider the inevitable result which would follow from this indefensible doctrine of theirs. It is evident that if a person is prevented from giving up Islam on account of fear, or retracts after repudiating it on account of the fear of death, he cannot become a true Muslim. In his heart of hearts he will nurse a deep hatred for the faith, though he might pay a lip homage to it. Such a person in Islamic terminology is termed a *Munafiq* or hypocrite. If the Holy Quran permits hypocrisy or welcomes the presence of hypocrites among the Muslims, then this doctrine of force will suit the purpose par excellence. If, on the other hand, the contrary is the case, and God strongly condemns hypocrisy and characterises it as wrose than disbelief or *kufr* and does not tolerate the presence of hypocrites in the Muslim society, then it is absolutely clear that one who does not want to remain a Muslim should never be compelled to remain as one by force, as he will only be a hypocrite. The sword may silence, but it cannot convince : it may enforce hypocrisy, it can never force belief. Let us see what does the Holy Quran say about hypocrites :

1. Those who believe, then disbelieve, then again believe, then disbelieve, and then increase in disbelief, Allah

will never forgive them, nor will He guide them to the way. (4 : 138)

2. Give to the hypocrites the tidings that for them is a grievous punishment. (4 : 139)

3. Surely Allah will assemble the hypocrites and the disbelievers in Hell, all together. (4 : 141)

It is not only that the hypocrites and disbelievers would be sent to Hell together, but it is stated that the punishment of the former will be much severer, as the following verse says :

4. The hypocrites shall surely be in the lowest depth of the Fire. (4 : 146)

Then again God does not like that hypocrites should accompany the believers even in *Jehad* :

5. And if Allah return thee to a party of them (hypocrites), and they ask of thee leave to go forth to fight, say then, 'you shall never go forth with me, and shall never fight an enemy with me'. (9 : 83)

6. O Prophet ! strive hard against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and remain firm against them ; and their abode is hell ; and evil is their destination. (9 : 73)

In the following verse God expresses His anger against them :

7. It is equal to them whether thou ask forgiveness for them, or ask not forgiveness for them, Allah will never forgive them. Surely Allah guides not the rebellious people. (63 : 7)

God forbids the Muslims to say funeral prayers for them, or to visit their graves :

8. And never pray thou for any of them that dies, nor stand by his grave ; for they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger and died while they were disobedient. (9 : 84)

9, Do they not see that they are tried every year once or twice? Yet they do not repent, nor would they be admonished. (9 : 126)

Thus, while God wants to enable the Muslims to turn out

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hypocrites, the supporters of the death penalty in case of apostasy would like them to remain in the Muslim society. What divergence between the Quranic teachings and the views of these persons !

In the Holy Quran God calls hypocrites apostates :

1. They swear by Allah that they said nothing, but they did certainly use blasphemous language, and disbelieved after they had embraced Islam. (9 : 74)
2. Offer no excuse, you have certainly disbelieved after your believing. (9 : 66)
3. They have made their oaths a shield ; thus they turn men away from the way of Allah. Evil surely is that which they have been doing. This is because they first believed, then disbelieved. So a seal was set upon their hearts and consequently they understand not. (63 : 3,4)
4. Surely, those who turn their backs, after guidance has become manifest to them, Satan seduced them, and holds out to them false hopes. This is because they said to those who hate what Allah has revealed, We will obey you on some matters' ; and Allah knows their secrets. (47 : 26, 27)

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Thus about the hypocrites God says that after accepting Islam, they again became disbelievers, and thereby they are guilty of apostasy. As they have been termed as "apostates" by God Himself, there cannot be any doubt about their apostasy. Let us see if the punishment prescribed for them is death. If it is, then there would be no doubt that the punishment of apostasy in Islam is death ; but if, on the contrary, it can be shown that nowhere in the Holy Quran it has been laid down that such persons are to be put to death, then there is no doubt that apostasy is not to be punished with death.

In the verses quoted below no death penalty is prescribed for the hypocrites who have been called apostates by God :

1. And never pray thou for any of them that dies, nor stand by his grave ; for they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger and died while they were disobedient.

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And their possessions and their children should not excite thy wonder; Allah only intends to punish them therewith in this world and that their souls may depart while they are disbelievers. (9 : 84,85)

2. And if Allah return thee to a party of them (hypocrites), and they ask of thee leave to go forth to fight, say then, 'You shall never go forth with me and shall never fight an enemy with me'. (9 : 83)

3. As for those who have disbelieved, and die while they are disbelievers, there shall not be accepted from any-one of them even an earthful of gold, though he offer it in ransom. It is these for whom shall be a grievous punishment and they shall have no helpers. (3 : 92)

From the conduct of the Holy Prophet, it is established beyond doubt that even a confirmed and notorious hypocrite was not put to death. The case of Abdullah-ibn Ubayy-ibn Salul is a direct authority on this point. Before the Holy prophet came to Medina, the people there were on the point of accepting him as their leader, but when the Prophet arrived there, he was recognised as the Leader. This shocked and displeased Abdullah Ibn Salul very much, and he became an enemy of the Prophet, but he did not show his resentment openly. Once while the Prophet was away from Medina, there was a quarrel between a Meccan and a Medinite Muslim over drawing water from a well. Both the *Ansar* and the *Muhajirin* raised an alarm, and thus there was great excitement, Abdullah Ibn Salul tried to add fuel to the fire and said, "Let us return to Medina, then will the most honoured among its citizens turn out the most despised" (Bukhari). By the most honoured citizen, he meant himself and by the most despised he meant the Holy Prophet. But the quarrel did not take a serious turn. When his own son heard about this speech of his father Abdullah Ibn Salul, he went to the Prophet and said, "O Prophet! my father has insulted you. Death is his punishment. If you decide so, I would rather have you command me to kill my father. If you command someone else, and my father dies at his hands, I may be led to avenge my father by killing that man. May be I incur the displeasure of God in this way." "But", said the Prophet, "I have no such intention. I will treat your father with compassion and consideration."

This was the treatment meted out to a notorious hypocrite by the Prophet.

From the study of the Holy Quran, it is evident that if a person becomes disbeliever after accepting the faith of Islam, no worldly punishment has been prescribed for him :

1. Whoso disbelieves in Allah after he has believed — save him who is forced thereto while his heart finds peace in the faith — but such as open their breasts to disbelief, on them is Allah's wrath; and they shall have a severe punishment. That is because they have preferred the present life to the hereafter, and because Allah guides not the disbelieving people. (16 : 107,108)

2. Those who believe, then disbelieve, then again believe, then bisbelieve, and then increase in disbelief, Allah will never forgive them nor will He guide them to the way. (4 : 138)

3. And they will not cease fighting you until they turn you back from your faith, if they can. And whoso from among you turns back from his faith and dies while he is a disbeliever, it is they whose work shall be vain in this world and the next. These are the inmates of the fire and therein shall they abide. (2 : 218)

4. O ye who believe! Whoso among you turns back from his religion, then let it be known that in his stead Allah will soon bring a people whom He will love and who will love Him ; and who will be kind and humble towards believers, hard and firm against disbelievers. They will strive in the cause of Allah and will not fear the reproach of a fault-finder. That is Allah's grace : He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases; and Allah is Bountiful, All-Knowing. (5 : 55)

This verse was revealed towards the close of the Prophet's life, when the Islamic State was fully established and he was at the zenith of his power, but there is no mention of any death penalty for an apostate.

5. And he who turns back on his heels, shall not harm

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Allah at all. And Allah will certainly reward the grateful. (3 : 145)

6. Aad whoever takes disbelief in exchange for belief, has undoubtedly gone astray from the right path. (2 : 109)

7. Many of the People of the Book wish out of sheer envy from their own selves that, after you have believed, they could turn you again into disbelievers after the truth has become manifest to them. But forgive and turn away from them, till Allah brings about His decree. Surely, Allah has the power to do all that He wills. (2 : 110)

8. And whoso seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the life to come he shall be among the losers. (3 : 86)

9. How shall Allah guide a people who disbelieved after their believing and after they had borne witness that the Apostle was true. (3 : 87)

10. Of such the reward is that on them shall be the curse of Allah and of angels and of men, all together. (3 : 88)

11. They shall abide thereunder. Their punishment shall not be lightened nor shall they be reprieved; except those who repent thereafter and amend. And surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful. (3 : 89,90)

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The Golden Mean

Mr. Bashir Ahmad, Orchard

Four thousand years ago the tribes of Israel laboured in captivity under the iron rule of the Pharaohs. They were employed in the building of the pyramids which stand as monuments of Egypt's ancient rulers. It is said that one hundred thousand men were engaged for thirty years in the construction of the great Pyramid of Cheops ; and some idea of the sweat and labour put into the construction of this massive memorial may be realized from the fact that two million, three hundred thousand blocks of stone weighing two and a half tons each were used. In addition, fifty six gigantic blocks of granite with an average weight of fifty four tons each were used for the roofing of the burial chamber ; and they had to be brought from distant quarries.

Suppression permeated the dynasty of the Pharaohs ; but while man proposes, God disposes. The decline of the might of the Pharaohs and the freedom and rise of the Israelites awaited only the decree of God. It was near at hand. God then bestowed upon Moses the mantle of prophethood and commanded him to go to the Royal Court and demand the release of the Israelites ; but Pharaoh was derisive and obstinate ; he would not hearken to the solicitations of God's Messenger ; thereupon God manifested His displeasure in the form of terrible visitations that scourged the land. Famine, plague and death followed one upon the other until Pharaoh, shaken and tremulous, reluctantly conceded to Moses's demands. And so the great exodus from Egypt began. For forty years they wandered and dwelt in the wilderness before they beheld the Promised Land ; and it was during that period that the Law of Commandments was revealed to Moses for their guidance.

The Israelites had been living in bondage for hundreds of years ; but now a promising future lay before them. Almighty God showered His blessings upon them and showed them the way of salvation. It must, however, be borne in mind, that the

Law of Moses is not a universal one ; nor was it intended to serve the Israel for all ages. It was revealed for the guidance of the Israelites only and in accordance with the peculiar exigencies of that epoch. That is why some of the commandments are extreme in nature :

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> "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

Fourteen hundred years later God raised up from among them the Prophet Jesus ; and although he did not bring a new law (Matthew 5 : 17), he permitted a temporary relaxation on certain precepts which the Jews had abused. This was to curb their excessive, revengeful and unjust infractions of the Law. Thus the opposite extreme was taught by Jesus :

> "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Matthew 5 : 38,39)

Now, both Moses and Jesus foretold the coming of a greater prophet than themselves who would bring a complete law ; and he was the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him) to whom was revealed the Holy Quran which contains a perfect, complete, universal and everlasting law. The following prophecy was revealed to Moses regarding the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him) :

> "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren ; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him."
>
> (Deut. 18 : 18, 19)

This prophecy refers to the coming of a prophet who would resemble Moses ; and the most distinctive mark of Moses was his being a prophet bearing a new law. It is, therefore, wrong to believe that the prophecy was fulfilled in the person of Jesus because he categorically stated that his mission was only to fulfil the Law of Moses and not to change it :

> "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the

prophets ; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them." (Matthew 5 : 17)

Jesus stated that he had not conveyed all truths necessary for the spiritual development of man ; and that after him another would come :

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"I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth ; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come." (John 16 : 12,13)

The one to come was the same one about whom Moses had spoken. The prophecy does not refer to the Holy Spirit which is one of the three Christian gods ; rather it refers to the noblest and best of all men—the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be upon him).

One of the beauties of Islam is that it presents a middle path of conduct. It does not teach either of the two extremes promulgated by Moses and Jesus :

"And the recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof ; but whoso forgives and his act brings about reformation, his reward is with Allah. Surely, He loves not the wrongdoers." (42 : 41)

The teaching neither insists upon retalitation nor upon unconditional forgiveness. Both may be meritorious acts if they befit the occasion. If forgiveness might result in the reformation of the offender then it would be all for the better ; but if the adoption of such magnanimity is likely to encourage the offender to continue his misconduct then he should be punished appropriately.

The poised mind

Islam is the most tolerant and broad-minded religion in the world. It has been revealed for all ages ; therefore it guides mankind along a middle path, and as an outcome the mind of a Muslim should be poised ; and if the mind is poised, the actions of the body are also poised, because man is what he thinks.

The body obeys the mind. Unclean thoughts crystallize into unclean habits and physical degradation ; righteous and uplifting thoughts crystallize into noble habits and physical purity. Likewise a poised mind crystallizes into composed and dignified habits and physical control.

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The mind of a Muslim should be open and flexible. The obstinate and closed mind is never in poise ; but this is the mental condition of the great majority of Muslims to-day. Islam is the elixir of life but on account of Muslims giving paramount attention to worldly interests, they have failed to absorb the bright essence of their faith. They do not enjoy the delightful experience of an open and peaceful mind ; and this mental defect is as prevalent among the learned and religious leaders as it is among the others.

The poised mind is more precious than the largest pearl or the finest gold. It is cool, serene and calm. It is never indifferent, vindicative or frustrated ; nor is it controlled by the emotions ; instead it is master over both the body and the nerves ; and it is a force of tremendous magnetic power. Who is not attracted towards the tranquil yet energetic mind ? It does not matter what inconveniences or misfortunes beset the possessor of such a mind. He is always composed, patient and courageous. Light always brightens his face. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah possessed a poised and heavenly temperament regarding which one of his closest disciples Maulvi Abdul Karim has penned his observations :

> "One day he said, 'I have such control over my passions and God has made myself so submissive to me that even if a man goes on abusing me in my face for one year, he would at last himself feel ashamed and will have to admit his failure to move me even a little.'.....His steadfastness and strength of will, like those of the Great Prophets (may peace and the blessings of God be upon them) are not affected at all by threats or by any fearful spectacle. No awful incident or painful disaster can distract his attention or make him forgetful of his duty.

I know from personal experience and from the testimony of others that the composure of mind and coolness of temper and gentle behaviour which characterise him during his health also characterise him during his illness. The Holy Quran says :

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'Allah establishes those who believe with an established word in this world and in the world to come.' The establishment spoken of in this verse is the very stability of temper possessed by the Promised Messiah. The perfect man whom the fire of this world — the fire of the misfortunes and hardships of this life — cannot affect, is the very believer whom the hell says, 'O believer pass on for thy light has extinguished my fire'."

The mind which is closed and obstinate is always out of poise ; while the mind which is open and flexible is an indication of poise.

The see-saw mind which is always running the gamut from one extreme to the other is never in poise. It is the mind that rules from the point of balance which is in poise.

The mind of the savage is never in poise ; and when the mind is not in poise, the impulse of the savage and pre-historic man begin to take control. Only a thin thread separates these two conditions of mind ; a little pressure and the thread snaps. Poise escapes as fast as gushing water rushes out of a breached dam. Then the inherent savage impulses manifest their courseness and brutality.

The seed of man contains the physical history of his ancestors as well as the physical history of his offspring. Embedded in that seed are the traits of his parents ; and the traits of his parents are coloured with the traits of his grand-parents ; there is in fact an unbroken chain of seeds tracing back to his pre-historic relatives who were characterised with wild and cruel dispositions which have lain latent in the seed of mankind ever since ; and they will continue to lie latent in the seed of all of mankind to come. Poise of mind will prevent them from being roused into physical manifestation.

Here is a highly respected preacher who has devoted his life to the service of God and humanity. His inspiring expositions of the Good Life and his charming personality win the general admirations of his flock. One day, while he is sitting at home preparing a sermon, the children of the house create an uproar and their strident voices scatter his thoughts to the wind. The muscles of his face harden into an expression of vexation; he commands them to be quiet. There is a hush for a brief moment; but no sooner has he returned to the preparation of his sermon, pandemonium again breaks out. This is more than he can tolerate; he jumps up with blazing eyes and cuffs a child across the head sending it sprawling on the floor; and he utters words that shock his wife. In this case he lost his poise and the head-strong impulse of the savage was roused and took possession of his mind; and it was an exhibition of the normal tendency of his ancient ancestors who roamed the forests and dwelt in caves.

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The characteristics of the savage reveal themselves to a greater or lesser extent in the lives of 99% of human beings. The purpose of life demands that man should prevent these latent impulses from being roused into savage action; and he who developes a poised mind, masters himself. This is therefore as good an occasion as any to quote the golden maxim: "He who is unable to master himself is unable to master others."

A transformation may be brought about in the life of a person by constantly holding in mind the characteristics of holy men; and if the preacher who struck the child had made it a practice of frequently focussing in mind mental pictures of poised persons, then in all probability he would have mastered the savage impulse which caused him to stumble.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, always maintained a cool demeanour amidst the constant noise and disturbance created by the children in his home. Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim has rendered an immense service by sketching some beautiful descriptions of the heavenly heart of the Promised Messiah:

"He possesses wonderful coolness of temper, composure of mind and extraordinary serenity and forbearance. However great tumult and noise there may be — tumult which distracts the mind and compels everyone to turn his attention to it — he will not even feel it and his mind will not be disturbed by it in the least. It is this very state of mind which the servants of God hanker after and pray for with tearful eyes.

"I have seen the Promised Messiah engaged in writing on difficult subjects and even composing Arabic works of unparalleled linguistic elegance in the midst of a great tumult and uproar. Reckless children and simple-minded women are quarrelling all around him, screeching and screaming and even grappling with one another and performing all the follies which little children and foolish women are apt to do and he goes on writing as if he were sitting in a place of solitude. It is in such noisy rooms that all the great and unparalleled works in Arabic, Persian and Urdu have been written."

There is no doubt that the Promised Messiah was favoured with an abundance of Grace. He and God were one in the sense that he reflected the attributes of God; and they shone through him more brightly than through any other person since the life-time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him). He was the Chosen One of God; he was purified by Divine Grace; his heart was free from the taint of sin; and his whole being imparted the fragrance of the bloom of heaven.

Man can advance towards but not reach the state of perfection solely by his own efforts. It is the Grace of God which crowns his endeavours with success and casts around him the mantle of absolute purity and righteousness. In the eyes of the sinner a devoted servant of God may appear to be as pure as an angel; but if Divine Grace has not lifted him up into the earthly realm known as 'Heaven on earth' then he is aware of his impurities. Whoever yearns for this spiritual condition on earth should know that he should prove himself worthy to be the recipient of this divine blessing through sincere endeavour to

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obey all the commandments of God and to live a righteous life. The Promised Messiah enjoyed the protective Grace of God and regarding this precious gift he has written :

"Many are the chains and fetters with which a man is bound, and his own exertions, however hard, are not sufficient to liberate him from them. He desires that he may become purified, but his efforts without the helping hand of God are of no avail, and sometimes he does stumble. To purify one from sins is the work of God only and there is no other power on the earth's surface which can bring about that object."

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Great heights of advancement may be attained within the the spiritual sphere when the desire and will to progress are intense and indomitable. Those who at one time may be living in the lowest condition of ignorance and degradation are not denied access to these spiritual heights. When the light of Truth dawns upon them there is nothing to hold them back ; and it may well be that they will overtake their teachers on this Royal Road. History contains many instances of virulent enemies of God's Laws and Messengers whose spiritual faculties later became awakened and they died in the bosom of God. Their lives altered for the better from one extreme to the other. Although we are advocating the avoidance of extremes, there is an exception to the rule in the cultivation of love for God.

It should be understood and appreciated that the desire to outstrip one's fellow beings in virtue is a commendable urge. If the feeling is absent then it is an indication that little or no spiritual force throbs within the heart.

This competitive spirit has been encouraged in the Holy Quran :

". . Vie, then, with one another in good works." (2 : 149)

In the affairs of this world there is a principle which leads men to the top rungs of success. It is the fire of desire and resolution; the fight to outstrip their competitors in their fields of endeavour. The same principle is efficacious in the affairs of the spirit and it is a healthy and fruitful one in every respect.

Mr. Henry Ford who founded the Ford Motor Company in 1903 is considered to be one of the most powerful industrial

magnates who has ever lived; yet he had only an elementary education and his early years were passed in poverty. He left school at the age of fifteen and became an apprentice in a machine shop working ten hours a day for two dollars fifty cents a week. His board and lodging alone cost three dollars fifty cents a week so in order to make up the deficit he earned an extra two dollars a week working from 7, p.m. to 11, p.m. in the employment of a jeweller. Such was the humble beginning of Mr. Ford's life. By 1940 the motor company which he had founded in 1903 had produced twenty eight million vehicles ! And when he died in 1947 his personal estates were valued at two hundred and fifty million dollars.

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If men can rise from the lowest to the highest rungs in worldly achievements, men can also rise from the depths of spiritual degradation to the state of holiness. The savage can become a saint ; and let it not be supposed that savages only live in the jungle. Today there are thousands of savages living in all the great cities of the world ; and rare indeed is the person who is not from time to time ruled by one or more of the savage impulses of his forefathers. These inborn tendencies come to the surface of life even in the lives of those who are deemed, and even deemed by themselves, to be righteous men.

Progress has no room for those weak-minded persons who make no serious effort to master their savage impulses and who excuse themselves on the pleas that they are irrevocable traits of their nature. Here is a man who is constantly irritable and impatient and one of his friends endeavours to defend his weakness with the apology: 'It is his nature to be so. There is nothing that can be done about it.' Nothing could be further from the truth. If a person is in real earnest to improve himself in any field of endeavour, there is absolutely nothing whatsoever to prevent his progress. Students of psychology, the science of the mind, know that the art of positive thinking can totally transform a person of bad habits into a person of good habits. In fact a person is what he thinks. The person who is continually souring his and other people's lives with his irate temper, has the capacity within himself to develop a tranquil and sweet-tempered demeanour; but, of

course, if he allows himself to drift through life without endeavouring to master himself, then he is what he is because he makes no effort along the right lines to shake off his shackles. Life is a battle ground. Everyone can become the general of his own destiny; and if at the same time he seeks the help of God he will have a resounding victory.

Islam is the path of peace; it directs one along the central road of life; so one who is truly imbued with the light of his faith, should be impregnated with the power and charm of a well-balanced poised temperament. Not only should he be charged with the spirit and power of Islam but he should manifest it through controlled channels. The zealous and enthusiastic Muslim who talks on and on without break and who is not a patient listener, is out of poise; so is the zealous defender of Islam who becomes irritated and excited in the presence of his critics; also may be included those Imams and lecturers who shout and make more noise than a good impression.

The descriptive sketches which now follow have been written to awaken the mind to the beauty of poise.

The satellite

The earth is a satellite of the sun and it travels at a speed of eighteen and a half miles per second on its annual circuit.

What is the subtle power which keeps it in orbit? It is the precise speed at which it travels whereby it is able to resist the magnetic pull of the sun and also the pull of centrifugal force. If it travelled at a slower speed, it would be drawn into the sun and destroyed; and if it travelled at a greater speed it would fly off its orbital course and disappear into the depths of space.

The earth orbits the sun in perfect poise; any digression would destroy all life.

Queen of the ocean

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Poise is seen in every movement of the luxuriant liner from the moment she sets sail to the time she docks at her port of destination.

The gangway is removed; mooring ropes unfastened, and

the engines begin to purr in the depths of her frame. Slowly and steadily, inch by inch she moves away from the wharf and with majestic grace silently moves down the estuary towards the open sea. Onlookers by the water's edge and peasants on the grassy slopes gaze with awe and admiration upon the stately vessel. There is no noise, no effort, as she glides through the water. There is only an indescribable presence of power and grandeur in perfect repose.

Now she is in open sea encircled by the distant sky line. The sky is grey and the water rough. Large waves smash against her sides and spray falls across her decks. But the great ship ploughs ahead seemingly unconscious of the efforts of the turbulent sea to disrupt her progress. On and on she goes while below deck all is calm and quiet. At last land is sighted and the features of a coastal port become clearer and clearer as the ship draws nearer. A little pilot boat rushes out to meet her over the choppy sea and a rope ladder is lowered for the pilot to clamber aboard and guide her into port. As the great monarch of the ocean moors besides her berth a church clock chimes the hour heralding her arrival on schedule.

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The state express

The powerful locomotive stands on the line awaiting the signal to pull her dozen coaches out of the station. The signal falls, the whistle blows and slowly and steadily she edges forward as her pistons smoothly rise and fall. She does not shake or rattle; nor is any of her pent up power wasted; that which is not required at the outset is conserved for the gathering of speed. Soon the city is left far behind and she is speeding across the plains and through the valleys. She runs so smoothly that her passengers are gently lulled to sleep. She is a wondrous spectacle of energetic power in perfect control; and this is the secret of real poise.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

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Jealousy — A Consuming Evil

Miss H. B. Sookia, Mauritius

Man is subject to many temptations. Sometimes he sinks as low as to drink, gamble, steal, tell a lie or fall into any other vicious habit. But there are some men who think themselves perfectly righteous simply because they do not practice such evils. If they only introspect and look into their conscience, they will find that there are certain vices which stick to them like clinging garments.

Every man in this world has his own short-comings and is often inclined to do evil. But he should keep in mind that the object of his creation is his submission to the Will of God and to shun these evils. It is not only sufficient for him to believe in Allah, His angels, His scriptures, His messengers and to say his daily prayers. Sometimes this is done just for the sake of routine. But he should always try to purify himself by taking the colour of Allah *i.e.*, by doing his utmost to acquire the attributes of the Almighty.

The first step to do so should be to clear himself of every evil thought and feeling. Some of the commonest evils which are often met with among the so-called righteous people are jealousy, envy and back-biting. Who can say that he has never talked ill of another behind his back? And this back-biting often leads to jealousy. Why is one jealous of another? Well, this is a personal question to which there can only be a personal answer.

Jealousy is a vice which one should do one's best to get rid of. This was the first sin committed on earth. Satan got jealous of Adam and tried to digress him from the right path. Abel got jealous of Caine and killed him for jealousy. A Muslim is he who always tries to shun this evil. His heart should be filled with love and affection for his fellow brother, his progress and success.

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Jealousy is a hinderance in one's progress towards happiness and peace of mind. The fire of jealousy consumes the man who is not pleased with the success of his brother. This evil feeling is, therefore, detrimental to one's own happiness as he can never enjoy the sweet peace of mind which is experienced only by those who do not cherish ill-will towards others.

A Muslim has far more facilities and chances to drive away evil thoughts and feelings, if he sets himself to this task with determination. He has but to offer sincere and special prayers to Allah Who is ever ready to give him help. Allah answers the call of everyone who calls with a sincere heart at his door. So whoever does feel a tinge of jealousy for another should think of Allah at that precise moment and implore His forgiveness for his weaknesses. He should bear in mind that he is his own master. His character is in his own personal care and it belongs to him alone to mould it into whatever shape he likes. He should therefore never allow himself to become enslaved by his passions. He should always try to remember this saying of the Holy Prophet, "Beware of jealousy, for jealousy consumes the virtues just as fire consumes fuel." In this way, he will be able to face life under whatever mask it presents itself before him. Thus, no jealousy or envy and consequently no back-biting will ever prevail.

The Messenger of God has also enjoined upon every Muslim to remain united in *Jamaat* or community, for unity among the members of any community or nation indeed works wonders.

Here is a short chapter from the Holy Quran which every good Muslim learns by heart and which is a great source of saving him from the jealousies of evil persons :

1. Bismilla-hir-Rahmanir-Raheem.	In the name of Allah, the Merciful and Compassionate.
2. Qul a-oozo bi-Rabb-il falaq-i	Say, 'I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn,
3. Min sharr-i ma khalaqa	'From the evil of that which He has created,

4. Wa min sharr-i ghasiqin iza waqaba,	'And from the evil of the night when it over-spreads,
5. Wa min sharrin naffasat-i fil uqad-i,	'And the evil of those who blow into knots to undo them,
6. Wa min sharr-i hasidin iza hasad.	'And from the evil of the envier when he envies.'

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Islam and Christianity

Kathleen Baker

Islam is an Arabic word which means (i) peace or making of peace, and (ii) submission (to the Will and Purpose of God). It is a very appropriate name for the true religion, for it points out both the goal of true religion and the means to attain that goal. The goal of true religion, as indicated by the word *Islam*, is peace — the inexpressible peace in the hearts of men and peace and good-will among human beings in their social relations, or peace with God and peace with men — and the means to realize such peace is to make human will one with the Divine Will, to be obedient to the Laws of God, to submit voluntarily and joyfully in every matter to the judgement of God.

The fundamental doctrines of Islam are :

(1) The Unity of God.
(2) A belief in the prophets sent by God to guide human beings to the right path.
(3) A belief in the Scriptures revealed through the prophets.
(4) Personal accountability for one's actions.
(5) A belief in the Life after death.

Islam did not originate from the preaching of the Prophet Muhammad, but it was as well the religion of the prophets that went before him. According to the Holy Quran, "there is not a nation but a prophet has been raised among them" (15 : 24), and the religion of every prophet, wherever he may have appeared, was no other than Islam. Islam was the religion of the prophets Krishna and Buddah of India, of Confucius and Lao Tzu of China, of Zoroaster of Persia, of Socrates of Greece, of Moses and Jesus of Israel, and so on. Prophet Muhammad, who was the Seal of the prophets, completed and perfected Islam for all nations and all times.

The differences that we find among the beliefs and practices of the followers of Moses, Jesus, Buddha and Muhammad are of

later growth. They have resulted from the fact that the Scriptures of Moses, Jesus and Buddah have not been preserved in their original form. Regarding the alterations that have been made in the Gospels of Jesus, Prof. Dummelow of Cambridge writes in his COMMENTARY ON THE HOLY BIBLE :—

> "A copyist would sometimes put in not what was in the text, but what he thought ought to be in it. He would trust a fickle memory, or he would make the text accord with the views of the school to which he belonged. In addition to the versions and quotations from the Christian Fathers, nearly four thousand Greek MSS. of the New Testament were known to exist. As a result the variety of reading is considerable."

The Quran is the only Scripture that has come to us in its pristine purity, exactly as it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.

While there was no difference between the original religion of Jesus Christ and Islam, modern Christianity, which has departed from the religion of Jesus by making compromises with paganism, is not the same as Islam.

The differences between Islam and Christianity are as follows :-

1. Christianity believes in trinity.	Islam gives the teaching of the Unity of God.
2. Christianity believes in the Original Sin, *i.e.*, the sin of Adam is inherited by all the children of Adam who are therefore born sinful.	Islam declares that all children are sinless and innocent at birth.
3. Christianity believes in Atonement. Jesus Christ, according to the Christians, took the sins of those who believe in him on his own back, and suffered and died on the	Islam says that every man is responsible for his own actions and no other person can bear his sins.

cross to pay the penalty for their sins.	
4. Christianity considers Jesus to be a Mediator between God and man, that by his blood shed on the cross he reconciled God and men.	Islam teaches that every man should have direct relations with God. No one can be a mediator between God and man.
5. Christianity regards Jesus to be the Son of God in the real sense. It says that Jesus was the second person in the Divine Trinity and that he appeared in a human body so that he may atone for the sins of men by his death on the cross and thus redeem men by his blood.	Islam believes in Jesus as a prophet and messenger of God. The Holy Quran says that God is only One; He neither begets nor is begotten. Jesus Christ came to the world with the same mission as other prophets, *i.e.* to lead the people to the right path. The purpose of his coming was not to be a scape-goat for the sins of others. Accordingly God saved him from the "accursed" death on the cross.
6. Christianity declares that Jesus died on the cross, that on the third day he came back to life and finally ascended bodily into heaven.	Islam says that Jesus Christ did not die on the cross, nor did he ascend bodily into heaven, but that, after accomplishing his mission, he died a natural death, like all other men, and was buried in the earth.

That the religion of Jesus was more in accord with Islam than with Christianity is clear from the facts that he never talked of the Trinity and that he denied his own divinity in these words: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God" (Mark 10 : 18). Jesus Christ confessed that he had not brought the complete religion and prophesied the appearance of Prophet Muhammad, whom he called "the Spirit of Truth," who would teach the world the complete religion :

> "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth" (John 16 : 12-13).

Islam is free from the mythical and magical elements that have found their way into Christianity. In Islam there are no mysteries, no saint-worship or idolatry. It is the only religion which has no priests. Islam is a simple religion which appeals to human reason and conscience. It is, moreover, a complete religion which has succeeded in establishing a wonderful harmony between the ideal and the practical, between the spirit and the matter, between the demands of this world and of the other world.

REVIEW

Le Message—French monthly magazine : Editor : M. I. Munir

It contains some of the good articles on Islam, such as Les Liberalites de I' Islam, La Tolerance Religieuse, un Conseil aux Dames and answers to some of the criticisms of Islam by non-Muslims. The articles are well written and well arranged, satisfying the real need of modern times. It is published under the auspices of the Ahmadiyya Association of Mauritius. Annual subscription is Rs. 2.50 including postage.'

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